



# Florida takes gun protest to streets

By Jason Dearen,  
Allen Breed  
and Tamara Lush  
The Associated Press

PARKLAND, Fla. — Thousands of angry students, parents and residents demanded stricter gun control laws Saturday as new details were revealed about the suspect accused of shooting and killed 17 people in a Florida high school.

The rally, held in downtown Fort Lauderdale, was attended by scores of students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, where the carnage happened.

Teens spoke passionately during Saturday’s rally in front of the federal courthouse, pleading with lawmakers to change the nation’s gun laws.

One student, Emma Gonzalez, angrily criticized politicians who take campaign contributions from the National Rifle Association. She challenged them to stop taking money, leading the crowd in a call-and-response chant.

“They say a good guy with a gun stops a bad guy with a gun,” she said, and the crowd chanted, “We call BS.”

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SPORTS | C1

## TAKING IT ON THE CHIN

Alabama men’s basketball team ‘outworked’ in 81-71 road loss to Kentucky



LOCAL | B1

## DANCING THE NIGHT AWAY

UA students hold 13.1-hour dance marathon to raise money for children’s hospital

# Supporting Team Green



Alabama gymnast Mackenzie Brannan fixes her hair as she secures a green ribbon in support of her brother Brian and his fight against cancer, in the locker room at Coleman Coliseum prior to a meet against Kentucky on Friday. [STAFF PHOTO/ERIN NELSON]

## UA gymnast joins sibling in fight against cancer

By Terrin Waack  
Special to The Tuscaloosa News

With one hand on each concrete post, Mackenzie Brannan lifts herself upside down into a handstand. She makes it look effortless, a glimpse of her future as a University of Alabama gymnast. Her legs are straight, toes pointed.

Her older half brother, Brian Roberts, looks on.

“Well,” he said, “I think I can do that.”

There’s a nine-year difference between Mackenzie and Brian, but on this day they’re playing together like little kids. That’s how it has always been with these two.

Brian successfully gets up on another pair of pillars right next to his still-balancing sister. While Brannan remains tall and strong, Brian’s legs bend and flail as he tries to stay upright.



The view, for anyone else wandering around that San Antonio plaza near the Alamo, is comical.

“My form is pretty good,” Brannan said. “His is little iffy, probably like a 9.2.”

The duo’s mother, Debi Brannan, snapped a photo, capturing a memory that is still cherished today, seven years later. Those were the easy, carefree days. It was before Mackenzie left for college, and well before Brian



received news that would forever change the Brannan family’s life.

On Nov. 17 last year, Brian was diagnosed with stage four hepatosplenic T-cell non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (HSTCL), a very rare and aggressive type of cancer.

“It stops you in your tracks,” Debi said, “and makes you realize how important just sitting on the back porch, sharing a glass of tea with your kid is.”

## ONLINE

For video of Mackenzie Brannan talking about her brother Brian’s fight with cancer, and for more photos of the Brannan family, go to [www.tuscaloosanews.com](http://www.tuscaloosanews.com)

**LEFT: Mackenzie Brannan with her brother Brian, who has been diagnosed with stage four hepatosplenic T-cell non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma (HSTCL), a very rare and aggressive type of cancer. [SUBMITTED PHOTO]**

## The diagnosis

The first cancer scare came when Brian was 18 months old. His day-care provider noticed he wasn’t doing well and notified his mother. Debi took him to the pediatrician, where she was ultimately told her baby boy might have leukemia. He was immediately taken to the hospital. Tests were done, including

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# Adviser: Meddling ‘incontrovertible’

## National security adviser says there is undeniable evidence of Russian plot to disrupt 2016 election

By Desmond Butler  
and David Rising  
The Associated Press

MUNICH — President Donald Trump’s national security adviser said Saturday there was “incontrovertible” evidence of a Russian plot to disrupt the 2016 U.S. election, a blunt statement that shows how

significantly the new criminal charges leveled by an American investigator have upended the political debate over his inquiry.

The statement by H.R. McMaster at the Munich Security Conference stood in stark contrast to Trump’s oft repeated claim that Russian interference in his election victory was a hoax.

“As you can see with the FBI indictment, the evidence is now really

See PROBE, A7

# Light penalties await most who are caught texting while driving

By Paul Feldman  
FairWarning (TNS)

The victims include a 23-year-old highway construction worker in Washington state, a 13-year-old Michigan boy riding in his older sister’s car and a Minnesota school bus driver picking up the morning newspaper in front of his home.

All were killed in recent years by distracted drivers who had been texting or otherwise looking at their phones.

Yet none of the drivers responsible for those deaths has been ordered to spend more than a few days in jail.

Although there are no national statistics on the results of prosecutions brought against distracted drivers who kill or severely injure people, light punishment appears to be the norm. A review by FairWarning of prosecutions of distracted drivers — cases gleaned from

See TEXTING, A8